ANCIENT SKIES

"Come Search With Us!"

Official Logbook of the Ancient Astronaut Society

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VOLUME 16, NUMBER 5, 1921 ST. JOHNS AVE., HIGHLAND PARK, ILLINOIS 60035-3105 USA NOVEMBER-DECEMBER, 1989

THE SEARCH FOR EXTRATERRESTRIAL ARTIFACTS

BY DR. VLADIMIR V. RUBTSOV*

The search for ancient "extraterrestrial artifacts" (ETAs) is one of the most important and worthwhile directions of investigation in paleovisitology. And yet it progresses by touch, so to speak, that is, with no serious theoretical basis. In fact, there is even no real search. There have been only a few attempts to apply rather vague ideas of extraterrestrial artifacts to certain enigmatic finds. Here we will try to sketch some elements of a more rigorous approach to this task.

By an "extraterrestrial artifact" we imply an artificial object, made by extraterrestrials. Of course,this is only an elucidation of this notion's meaning, not its definition. But what does the word "artificial" really mean? One believes quite often that it amounts to the expression: the object is manufactured. Yet there is another side, of no less importance: an artificial object is involved in a sociocultural system, it performs certain functions in it, or, in other words, has a certain meaning for intelligent beings who created it. The purpose of making an artificial object is imparting some sense to it; that is why just the sense is the gist of the notion of artificiality. One may say that such an object is the unity of its meaning and its design.

An extraterrestrial artifact may be found either by chance, or as a result of an intended search. An accidental discovery may be "scientific"(if it takes place as part of some scientific research, such as geological or paleontological).What kind of ETAs may we hope to find? One can suggest the following variants; the list certainly far from complete:

1. A whole artifact, aimed at an active or passive contact with the terrestrial civilization when the latter has reached a certain level of development. It may be named a "time capsule" or "message bag."

2. An active whole artifact, not aimed at any contact, but functioning for a purpose that was set by its creators. For example, an automatic seismograph or ecological monitor, left here by space visitors.

3. A whole, but non-functioning artifact. For instance, a deserted space rover, or an exhausted source of energy, or an extraterrestrial statue.

4. A decaying ETA, that keeps some signs of wholeness.

5. Parts of a wrecked device,void of wholeness but keeping some indications of their artificial origin.

It is easy to imagine even the case of complete destruction of an ETA, its transition into a pseudo-natural state and mixing its substance with terrestrial ones. In this case it is not improbable that one can find such a paleovisit trace by some peculiarities of its composition, such as isotopic.

Naturally, any search requires some theoretical model of the object to be found, that is of the ETA we are searching for. But the model of an "abstract ETA" would be empty and useless for a real search; at the same time the model of a "specific artifact" (for instance, of an extraterrestrial computer) would restrict very much the field of our vision and probably miss various other possible objects (say, an extraterrestrial tea set). Needless to add that our conception of an ET computer, as well as of an ET tea set, may have little in common with reality. That is why the real search for ETAs ought to start from using some general criteria, not detailed models. These criteria would be worked out within the framework of a serious study of the "phenomenon of artificiality". They would allow, when scanning the information of various real objects, as well as of empirical facts from the scientific picture of the world, to select supposedly artificial ones.

At this stage of the investigation we try to single out only the objects and phenomena which deserve further exploration. In other words, we assume some (perhaps significant) likelihood of mistake. It is rather difficult to ensure wedding of the following two opposite characteristics of these criteria: they must be both highly definite (so that we would get at the "output" an amount of phenomena, considerably reduced as against that at the "input") and at the same time "broad-embracing" (to "intercept" as many "likely ETAs" as possible).

Because we are trying to find an extraterrestrial artificial phenomenon, we need, apart from criteria of its artificiality, some criteria of its "alienness", which would enable us to select this phenomenon against the background of similar terrestrial artificial phenomena. Certainly, such criteria may be just implied (if, for example, the object under investigation was found in the "pre-human" strata of the "geological chronicle" of the Earth), but it remains quite important, nonetheless. Let us remember that there are two alternatives to the assumption of the object's extraterrestrial artificial origin: either it is natural, or artificial, but terrestrial.

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*This article was presented by Dr. Rubtsov at the 16th Anniversary World Conference of the Ancient Astronaut Society in Chicago in August, 1989. Dr. Rubtsov received his Masters Degree in computer science in 1972 and his Doctorate in the philosophy of science in 1980. His doctoral thesis was on "Philosophical-Methodological Aspects of the Problem of Extraterrestrial Civilizations", the first of its kind in the USSR. He has been active in ancient astronaut studies since 1966, having published a book and over 40 articles on the subject of extraterrestrial intelligence. Currently Dr. Rubtsov is a senior research fellow at the Department of Philosophy, Ukrainian Extramural Polytechnic Institute in Kharkov. His address is Ul. Chernishevskogo, 88, kv.66,Kharkov 310023,USSR.

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If an old age of the find was not ascertained, this task is rather hard. We find ourselves before a pitfall: an object, whose technological level is only a little higher than that of known (and similar) terrestrial ones might be made in a secret laboratory here on Earth. And an object, manufactured by technologies whose level far exceeds the terrestrial one, will almost certainly remain mistaken for something natural or even unrecognizable as something worthy of note.

When we have only some spoiled fragments of an ETA, we must restore their original state and then reconstruct the ETA.Whether or not this task can be fulfilled depends on the extent of preservation of these fragments, their representativeness as regards the original ETA, the researcher's ability to build up a good theoretical model of the latter, and so forth. Certainly, the result of such restoration cannot be quite unambiguous.

One can imagine a situation where it is impossible to restore the whole device from its remnants, but nonetheless we may assert: this was an ETA. It requires proving: first, a geological (or at least prehistorical) age of the find; second, its artificial origin; and third, its super-high (but intelligible to us) technological level. As a matter of fact, a preliminary selection of "possible extraterrestrial artifacts" (PETAs) is some "intuitive" analog of this situation; but, certainly, persuasiveness of the starting point of an investigation would not be the equivalent of its result.

However, only seldom may the result be considered to be fully reliable. Generally we will have several alternative hypotheses on the nature of an object under examination. It is necessary indeed for any serious scientific study. There will appear, on the basis of these hypotheses, a set of various research programs, whose development may lead us to the final answer. The chief thing at this stage of investigation is an interdisciplinary study of the object, including physical, chemical, technological, structural and other types of analysis. Their results would be brought together forming a system model (or a number of models) of the ETA.

Thus we have considered a theoretical scheme of investigation of supposed extraterrestrial artifacts. Let us compare this theory with several examples "from life". We do not know as yet any object that may be definitely referred to as an ETA. But there are some candidate objects. I will dwell here upon three cases: the "cube from Wolfsegg",the Vashka find, and the so-called "black ball."

The Wolfsegg Cube is, strictly speaking, not a cube, but something like a small metal pillow with maximum dimensions of 67x62x47 millimetres. A deep incision runs around it, on all its narrow sides. It was found on November 1, 1885 at a steel and file factory, situated at Schoendorf, near Voecklabruck, Austria, when a workman named Riedl broke a piece of lignite. The lignite originated in a coal pit at Wolfsegg. The German mining engineer, Dr. Fridrich Adolf Gurlt, took a great interest in that find. On June 7, 1886, he showed it to the members of the Natural History Society at Bonn, telling them that the object weighed 785 grams, had specific gravity of 7.7566 g/cm^3, the hardness of steel, and contained, apart from chemically fixed carbon, a tiny percentage of nickel. Dr. Gurlt thought the "cube" to be in fact a meteorite. However some specialists believed already then that it was in reality an artifical object, though apparently quite terrestrial.(1)

The find was widely noticed because fossil meteorites are rather rare; the information about the "cube" was presented on October 16, 1886 at a session of the French Academy of Sciences, and on February 20, 1887 at a meeting of the Belgian Geological Society. Some twenty journals (including such prestigious ones as "Nature" and "L'Astronomie") published articles or short reports on this find. All the authors agreed that only a complete chemical analysis was able to solve the riddle of the nature of the "cube."Yet,for some unknown reason such an analysis was not conducted at the time.

The find was forgotten until 1919 when Charles Fort came across the old Journals and supposed the "cube" to be steel, machined at the Tertiary period by extraterrestrial visitors. Nobody paid serious attention to his supposition until 1955 when Morris Jessup, an American astronomer and historian, put it forward again in his book, The Case for the UFO. Since then this hypothesis has become commonplace in ancient astronaut publications,although without additional investigation or theoretical thought.

What about the "cube" itself? It seems that until 1958 it was kept at the Francisco-Carolinum Museum at Linz. Then the find got into the local museum of Voecklabruck. In 1966 it was sent to Vienna for modern detailed analysis. Its reults indicated iron with no nickel, chromium or cobalt, but with a little manganese and manganese-sulphurs. This resembles rather cast-iron, not a meteorite substance.(2 and 3). To date that is all the information we have on the "cube".

What attracted the attention of researchers to this case "from the ET point of view?" First, its strange, irregular shape. Then, if the "cube" were the result of high-technology, for its Tertiary Age it might almost surely be considered as extraterrestrial in origin. But the composition of the object seems to be much too ordinary for an alien artifact and this caused doubts as to its seemingly geological age.

The second case involves the discovery of a fragment of a metallic object in 1976 near the Vashka River in the Komi Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic,USSR. This object is shaped like a cylinder, or ring, about 1.2 metres in diameter. When subjected to the slightest coercion, the fragment began to sparkle. The find was cut into several pieces and studied in a number of Soviet laboratories, including the All-Union Institute of Nuclear Geophysics and Geochemistry, the S.I.Vavilov Institute of Physical Problems and the V.I.Vernadsky Institute of Steel and Alloys. It was Dr. Vladimir Fomenko, a member of the All-Union Committee on Anomalous Phenomena, who co-ordinated this research work. Some results were published in 1985.(4)

It is known that the Vashka fragment consists of an alloy of the following rare earths: cerium (67.2%), lanthanum (10.9%) and neodymium (8.78%). There are also small amounts of iron and magnesium, as well as uranium and molybdenum (the latter ones less than 0.04%). Researchers came to a common conclusion that the alloy was evidently of artificial origin. However, it contains no traces of calcium and sodium, which is impossible with the known technologies of making rare earths alloys. There are no traces of other rare earths either.

Judging from the data obtained by X-ray structural and electrongraphic analyses, the fragment was made of a mixture of powders with various crystalline structures. The finest particles of the powder each consist of several hundreds of atoms only. The magnetic properties of the alloy differ in various directions by more than 15 times. The concentration of the products of the thorium decay suggests that the age of the fragment hardly exceeds 30 years. It is interesting to note, however, that there is a noticeably increased concentration of lanthanum and cerium on the site of the famous Tunguska explosion which occurred in the Soviet Union on June 30, 1908.(5) Also, a line extending from one of the possible trajectories of the body beyond the explosion point at Tunguska leads exactly to the place of the Vashka find.

Researchers agree that the Vashka object is artificial but, is it terrestrial or not? It seems impossible to create an alloy having such a composi-

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tion and structure, or to make such a large ring with existing technology. But, as has been noted above, it is not unbelievable that the West or the East can have some secret achievements, which the public is not aware of. The conclusion to this story is still unknown.

Finally, the "black ball", which was discovered in 1975 in Western Ukraine at a clay quarry at a depth of 8 metres. The age of the clay bed was about 10 million years.An excavator saw the object, picked it up and hit it on the edge of a bucket. The ball-shaped object did not split, but a piece broke away, exposing a black glass-like substance.

For some time the object was kept at the local village museum, but then a relative of the museum's curator arrived there from Moscow and took an interest in the find. He took the ball to Moscow where, in 1979, scientists of several prestigious institutes investigated it. A very detailed and sophisticated research program was elaborated, but only a small part of it was in fact performed, because a week later the owner of the ball demanded that it be returned to him.Nonetheless, the results which were obtained are rather interesting.

The investigation was unofficial and unexpected. I did not participate in the investigation, but I did read the final report and consider it to be of a high scientific level. The "ball" is slightly egg-shaped, with the length of the greater axis 87.5 millimetres and the diameter of the largest cross section, perpendicular to the axis, 84.7 millimetres. An X-ray study discovered within the ball an inner core, shaped like a half of an egg. Apparently, the blunt part of the ball, situated over the butt-end of the core, is a hermetic lid. The core absorbs X-rays 4 times less intensively than the shell. The volume of the core is about 80 cubic centimetres, that of the entire ball 320 cubic centimetres. The ball weighs 617 grams, with average density of 1.9 grams per cubic centimetre. The researchers did not have enough time to establish the composition of the find, but it seems to consist of quartz glass.

An attempt to determine separate weights and densities of the shell and the core led to a scandalous result: the weight of the shell was found to be 981 grams, the weight of the core minus 364 grams; the density of the shell was 4.08 g/cm^3, and that of the core minus 4.58 g/cm^3. Thus, we have to deal with a substance of a negative mass!? The attempt was repeated three times (although by the same method) and the result was the same. Unfortunately, there was no time to verify it in a different way.

On this basis the researchers proposed a number of hypotheses on the nature of the core, but since the "negative mass" result is not very reliable, these suppositions are,in my view,rather premature.

Nonetheless, the ET hypothesis of the ball origin seems worthwhile. In particular, the researchers believe that one can notice the following units in the linear and angular dimensions of the ball: 3.65 millimetres and 15 degrees. Such units have never been used by any known terrestrial culture.

Regretfully the scientists still cannot continue their research work on the ball because it is private property and its owner does not wish to part with it again, even for a short time.

What can we benefit from our study of these three cases? All the finds were discovered by chance and they attracted researchers' attention by their "strangeness." Further, they rather correspond to our "intuitive" notion of artificiality and the artificial origin of one of them, the Vashka find, has in fact been proved. These objects have been studied (best of all the Vashka find; worst of all the Wolfsegg "cube") but in every case something is lacking for a definite conclusion on their being ETAs. The "cube" does not reveal a sufficiently high level of technology; the Vashka find is too recent in age, and the ball has not been proved to be really artificial.

Thus,we see that it is first of all the "strangeness" of a real PETA that draws attention to it. It is important also not to have a convincing "normal" explanation for the object. But it is quite evident that "strangeness" in itself is only the signal to draw attention to the ofject to begin to determine whether it is really artificial, or really extraterrestrial. To reach an ultimate solution, we need not only experimental investigations of possible ETAs by the most sensitive devices and analytical methods, but also it is essential to have a general theory of artificiality, as well as a theory of the evolution of artifacts during the history of a cosmic civilization. A serious investigation of PETAs requires also a methodology of developing models of artifacts on the basis of studying their remnants. There exist certain rudiments of such a methodology in archaeology, but certainly, paleovisitology sets much more difficult tasks.

It should be taken into account that in the not so distant future we may depend mainly upon accidental discovering of PETAs. It is necessary to set up an efficient system for gathering and evaluating such information, as well as for promptly reacting to it. I have heard from trustworthy people that some possible ETAs were and still are being lost, mainly because of lack of interest. It is necessary to reveal and concentrate dispersed data of such kind, to accumulate a data bank and to develop systematic theoretical and experimental research in this field. Otherwise, even those possible ETAs which we happen to know of will remain nothing more than strange curiosities. But if the system of their search and investigation is well organized they may become the final proof of the reality of paleovisits to Earth.

References:

1. A. Gurlt, Verhandlungen des naturhistorischen Vereins Rheinlandes und Westfalens,1886,Band 43.
2. The Voecklabruck Object, The INFO Journal,1967, Vol. I, No. 2.
3. H. Malthaner, Pursuit, 1973, No. 6.
4. I. Mossin, Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya,1985, Jan.27, No.23.

5. EDITOR's NOTE: The explosion which occurred in the Tunguska region of central Siberia in the Soviet Union in 1908 was of cataclysmic proportions. Seismographs around the world were activated by the blast; the sound was so great that it was heard 500 miles away and persons near the site were deafened; a searing thermal current burned an area within a 40 mile radius of the blast site; a devastating shock wave ripped up nearby villages and after-shocks were felt hundreds of miles away. The accepted explanation in the scientific community is that a huge meteorite had succeeded in entering Earth's atmosphere and crashed into the Taiga near the Tunguska River.However, there are eye witness accounts which describe watching a cylindrical object very high in the sky which was moving at a great velocity. Suddenly the object stopped and changed directions and proceeded a short distance and reversed its course. Then, the observers saw the high-altitude explosion. Many persons now believe that the object was a spacecraft from outer space which malfunctioned and its nuclear powered propulsion unit exploded,causing devastation on the ground below, not unlike an atomic bomb explosion.

Dr. Vladimir Rubtsov spent several years in the study of the Tunguska explosion in the laboratory of Dr. A.V. Zolotov, one of the leading experts on the subject. He said that there is no crater at the explosion site, thus proving that no meteorite hit the ground. Dr. Rubtsov further advised us that the "official" explanation in the Soviet Union on the subject is that "there is no explanation!"

For a detailed discussion of the Tunguska explosion see The Fire Came By, by Baxter and Atkins, Warner paperback, 1976.

IT IS WITH EXTREME PLEASURE AND ENTHUSIASM THAT I

WRITE TO YOU.My wife and I thank you for a fulfilling,educational and well-organized 16th Anniversary World Conference of the Ancient Astronaut Society. This was our first and it has left a lasting and pleasing impression on us. The Conference has not only reinforced our own beliefs, but also has offered new perspectives to the field of paleovisitation. We were given the rare opportunity to meet and talk with the spokesmen and leaders of our field and to discuss our own ideas with them. We also had the opportunity to meet fellow members, exchange ideas and form new friendships. We were pleased to meet others who share our own views.

In 1978 I was introduced to the concept of ancient astronauts through the television series Battlestar Galactica. The profound idea that Earth had been founded by a spacefaring civilization in the distant past was alluring to me. Galactica was my conduit to the works of Erich von Daniken and Zecharia Sitchin. Later, I joined the Ancient Astronaut Society and my life was enriched even more.The Conference tied everything together for us.

We now look at the world and human civilization through different eyes.To sum it up,the Conference was phenomenal and much better that we ever could have imagined. I thought that our attendance would close a circle, but this was erroneous.We have taken a journey to another level. Nothing ended with the Conference; it was only the beginning!

Kerry P. Ganza, 1901 N. Wilmot, #2233, Tucson, Arizona 85712 USA.

EXCITING YUCATAN ADVENTURE PLANNED FOR SPRING, 1990

Over thirty archaeological sites and five museums will be visited on the Society's Member Expedition to Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula. The explorations will begin in Cancun, Quintana Roo on March 22 and follow La Ruta Maya via private motorcoach southward along the Caribbean coast to the top of Belize, then westward across the peninsula and then north to Campeche on the Gulf of Mexico. Then inland to Merida and finally eastward through Chichen Itza and Valladolid to Cancun for a day of sun and fun.

All major ruins in the circuit will be explored, including Tulum, Coba, Kohunlich, Becan, Edzna, Uxmal, Kabah, Sayil, Labna, Mayapan, Dzibilchaltun, Ake, Izamal, Chichen Itza and Yaxuna, plus a score of lesser important sites. Two caves, Bolonchen and Loltun, are on the itinerary.

Members may join the tour in Chicago or in Cancun. Those from Chicago will enjoy non-stop flights on Mexicana Airlines to Cancun on March 22 and return to Chicago on April 4. Space is limited and reservations will be accepted on a first come-first served basis. Anyone interested in participating should contact the Society Headquarters immediately for prices and a detailed itinerary.

ERICH VON DANIKEN will present a series of slide lectures in nine cities in Australia from November 22 through December 5, 1989. The lecture tour is sponsored by Eagle Film Corporation of West Melbourne. This will be Mr. von Daniken's first visit to the continent "down under".

PLEASE NOTE: The Society has a new telephone area code-708. The number to call now is 708-295-8899.

ANCIENT SKIES is published bi-monthly by the ANCIENT ASTRONAUT SOCIETY, 1921 St. Johns Ave., Highland Park, Illinois 60035-3105 USA,for distribution to its members. Tel. (708) 295-8899.

The Ancient Astronaut Society, founded in 1973, is a tax-exempt, not-for-profit corporation organized exclusively for scientific, literary and educational purposes.

NEW ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERIES IN MALTA

A very interesting archaeological find is being revealed by the University of Malta in collaboration with the University of Cambridge and the Maltese Antiquities Authority. Excavations are being carried out at a new site called Brochtorff Circle in Xagtua on Gozo, Malta's sister island. The Circle is a burial zone of the Temple Age, a unique underground cemetery which is unlike any other place ever found before on the Maltese Islands. What is more interesting is that the zone, which is quite a big area, also has external structures.

Apart from some small finds made in connection with different burials, a group of thirty skeletons and another group of nineteen were also found They are of quite large body structure.

It is still too early for one to give more detailed information except that most probably a Hypogeum in ruins will be found underneath the burial site.

I think that it is a very important discovery and that it will reveal many interesting artifacts and possibly among the ruins will be the proof to strengthen the ancient astronaut theory.

Mrs. Joanne Zammit, "Bellview", Flat 4, Brared St., B'Kara, MALTA, Europe.

OLDEST STATUE?

According to an article in the Chicago Tribune of October 30, 1989, archaeologists in Iraq have discovered "the world's oldest statue." The four feet high stone is covered with a plaster molded into the shape of a human. The "stone man" is estimated to be 11,000 years old and is 3,000 years older than the world's previously known oldest statue.

The statue was discovered at the site of Qermez Dere, 300 miles northwest of Baghdad. The excavation is under the direction of an archaeologist of the Edinburgh University.

This is another step in the right direction- backwards. Our advice - keep looking. There are undoubtedly many statues much, much older than the "oldest statue."

EVOLUTION A THEORY, NOT A FACT

On November 9,1989, the California Board of Education approved new science guidelines which describe evolution as the "central organizing theory" of life's origins. No longer will the theory be taught in California schools as "scientific fact". Admittedly, the opposition to evolution as a scientific fact came from religionists; however, this is another step in the right direction. The next giant step is for educators to acknowledge that there are three principal theories for the origin of intelligent life on Earth - evolution, divine creation, and the ancient astronaut theory.

CALVIN KNOWS

In the syndicated comic strip, Calvin and Hobbes, of November 8, 1989, Calvin tells his tiger Hobbes: "Sometimes I think the surest sign that intelligent life exists elsewhere in the universe is that none of it has tried to contact us."

BRAD STEIGER's latest book, MYSTERIES OF TIME AND SPACE, is available in oversize paperback from the Schiffer Publishing, Ltd., 1469 Morstein Road, West Chester, PA 19380 USA.

COMING EVENTS IN 1991

-World Conference in West Berlin, August, 1991.
-Member Expedition to Turkey immediately following the Conference.